

# **FINAL REPORT**

## **2nd Mini Children and Family Service Review**

### **Northern Service Area**

**(April 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> 2010)**

## **Executive Summary**

### **Children and Family Services Review**

#### **(Northern Service Area)**

A mini CFSR was held in Norfolk on April 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, 2010. 14 cases were reviewed. The period under review was April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 through April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010. 8 cases were foster care cases and 6 were in home cases. Four cases were OJS and the others were abuse/neglect. The offices where the cases were reviewed from were Blair, Columbus, Dakota City, Fremont, O'Neill and Norfolk. There were 5 pairs of reviewers that conducted this review and it was a joint effort between Health and Human Services and out of home reform contractors. Second level review was completed by Quality Assurance workers Leslie Schlecht and Kayl Dahlke.

#### **Background Information**

The mini CFSR is modeled after the Federal CFSR reviews and assesses the service area's performance on 23 items relevant to seven outcomes.

With regards to outcomes, an overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement (ANI) is assigned to each of the 23 items incorporated in the seven outcomes depending on the percentage of cases that receive a Strength rating in the onsite case review. An item is assigned an overall rating of Strength if 95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed are rated as Strength.

Performance ratings for each of the seven outcomes are based on item ratings for each case. A service area may be rated as having "substantially achieved," "partially achieved," or "not achieved" the outcome. The determination of whether a service area is in substantial conformity with a particular outcome is based on the percentage of cases that were determined to have substantially achieved that outcome. In order for a service area to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. The standard for substantial conformity is based on the standard set for Federal CFSR. The standards are based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country's most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be acceptable. The focus of the CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; standards are set high to ensure ongoing attention to the goal of achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency, and well-being.

A service area that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must work with their local CQI team to develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of concern associated with that outcome.

#### **Key CFSR Findings Regarding Outcomes**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Mini CFSR identified several areas of high performance in Northern Service Area with regard to achieving desired outcomes for children. The service area did achieve substantial conformity with one of the seven CFSR outcomes, Outcome 1 (children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect). The service area did achieve overall ratings of strength for the individual indicators pertaining to timeliness of investigations (item 1), services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care (item 3), foster care re-entry (item 5), reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives (item

8), adoption (item 9), other planned living arrangement (item 10), placing children in close proximity to their parents (item 11), and placement with siblings (item 12).

The mini CFSR review also identified key areas of concern with regard to achieving outcomes for children and families. Concerns were identified with regard to Permanency Outcome 1 (children having permanency in living situation), which was substantially achieved in only 38 percent of the cases reviewed. The lowest rating within this outcome was for item 7 (permanency goal for child), which was rated as a strength in 38 percent of the cases reviewed.

Concerns were also identified with regards to Well Being Outcome 1 (families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs), which was substantially achieved in only 43% of the cases reviewed. The lowest ratings were for item 18 (child and family involvement in case planning) - rated as a strength in 43% of the cases reviewed and item 20 (caseworker visits with parents)-rated as a strength in 31% of the cases reviewed.

Items with ratings of 100% strengths this round were item 1 (timeliness of investigations), item 3 (services to prevent removal or re-entry in foster care), item 5 (foster care re-entries), item 8 (reunf. Guardianship or permanent placement with relatives), item 9 (adoption), item 10 (other planned living arrangement), item 11 (proximity of foster care), and item 12 (placement with siblings).

## KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

### I. SAFETY

*Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.*

#### Status of Safety Outcome S1

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	2	100%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	12	86%

#### **Item 1. Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment**

In assessing item 1, reviewers were to determine whether the response to a maltreatment report occurring during the period under review had been initiated in accordance with child welfare agency policy. A new intake tool was implemented in 2003 which is based upon a priority response model with Priority 1 calling for a response by the worker within 24 hours of the time that the report is received by DHHS. Priority 2 designated reports are to have face to face contact with the alleged victim by Protection and Safety within 0 to 5 days from the time the intake is received and Priority 3 has a response time of 0-10 days. Data is generated monthly to ensure compliance with the response times.

#### *Review Findings:*

- \*Two of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item.
- \* 2 (100%)cases were rated as strengths
- \*0 cases were rated as areas needing improvement
- \*12 cases were not applicable
- \*The two cases that were rated as strengths in this item were out of home cases.

*Strengths: Two cases had only one intake during the period under review and the timeframes were met. The intakes were unfounded.*

*Areas needing improvement: There were no areas needing improvement for this item.*

#### **Item 2. Repeat maltreatment**

In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether there had been at least one substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed maltreatment report during the period under review, and if so, whether another substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed report occurred within a 6 month period before or after the report identified. Cases were considered not applicable for assessment if the child or family had never had a maltreatment report.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Zero of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*0 cases were rated as strengths**

**\*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\*14 cases were not applicable**

***S1. Outcome Reviewer Comments: On the cases that were found to be substantially achieved for this outcome, the intakes received by the Department were investigated within the set time frames and face to face contact with the alleged victim was made within the timeframes. There were no cases found to be partially achieved on this outcome.***

***Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.***

**Status of Safety Outcome S2**

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	11	79%
Partially Achieved:	2	14%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	7%
Not Applicable:	0	0%

**Item 3. Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal**

For this item, reviewers were to assess whether in responding to a substantiated/inconclusive/petition to be filed maltreatment report or risk of harm, the agency made diligent efforts to provide services to families to prevent removal of children from their homes while at the same time ensuring their safety.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Eight of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item.**

**\*8 (100%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 6 cases were not applicable**

**\*Five of the cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases and three were out of home cases.**

***Strengths: In several cases it was noted that there were numerous services in place to prevent removal/re-entry in to foster care. Those services ranged from intensive outpatient treatment to family support in the home. Other services were tracker, transportation assistance, and intensive family preservation. In the majority of the cases reviewed the children were maintained in the home with the above mentioned services. In one case where removal did occur initially the child(ren) were returned to the home after the safety plan was developed and implemented. There were no cases found to be needing improvement on this item.***

**Item 4. Risk of harm to child**

The assessment of Item 4 required reviewers to determine whether DHHS had made, or was making, diligent efforts to reduce the risk of harm to the children involved in each case. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency terminated the child's parent's rights as a means of decreasing risk of harm for the child (for example, a termination of parental rights would prevent a child from being returned to a home in which the child would be at risk) and has taken action to minimize other risks to the child (for example, preventing contact with individuals who pose a risk to the child's safety). If a case is/was open for services for a reason other than a court substantiated, inconclusive, petition to be filed or unfounded report of abuse or neglect, or apparent risk of harm to the child(ren) (for example, a juvenile justice case), reviewers were to document this information and rate

the item as not applicable. Note, however, that for a child(ren) noted as a “child in need of supervision” or “delinquent”, reviewers were to explore and determine whether there was a risk of harm to the child, in addition to the other reasons the case may have been opened, prior to rating it as not applicable. Cases were not applicable for assessment of this item if there was no current or prior risk of harm to the children in the family.

***Review Findings:***

**\*All of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item.**

**\*11 (79%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*3 (21%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\*0 were not applicable**

**\*Five of the cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases. Six of the cases rated as strengths for this item were out of home cases. In the three cases rated as areas needing improvement for this item, one was an in home case and the other two were out of home cases.**

***Strengths: In the 11 cases substantially achieved there were no safety concerns found on the target child. In three cases it was noted that a Youth Level of Service (YLS) and a Case Management Inventory (CMI) was completed. One case was an Interstate Compact case and there were no ongoing safety concerns found in that case. Numerous cases had informal assessments and ongoing safety assessments in the case file that were completed by the DHHS worker.***

***Areas needing improvement: In the three cases found to be needing improvement it was noted that there were no ongoing assessments found in the case file for cases with permanency goals of reunification or case closure. It was also noted that there was no updated safety plan in one case where an intake was received and investigated. The safety plan in this case should have been updated to reflect that an investigation did occur.***

***S2. Outcome Reviewer Comments: On the cases that were rated as being substantially achieved reviewers comments ranged from the child’s placements being appropriate to meet the child’s needs, ongoing assessments being completed through family team meetings to in one case frequent calls and face to face contact with the youth by the tracker was being made up to 2 and 3 times per day. When children did remain in their homes it was the services implemented that prevented the removal. Reviewers comments on the cases found to be partially achieved were that there were no ongoing assessments found in the case file for reunification or case closure. In the case that was found to be not achieved for this outcome the reviewer’s commented that it was because a call to the hotline was made in regards to an out of home assessment and there was no documentation found in the case file as to follow up and a completed investigation into these allegations.***

## **II. PERMANENCY**

***Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.***

### **Status of Permanency Outcome P1**

	Total Number	Total Percentage

Substantially Achieved:	3	38%
Partially Achieved:	5	63%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	6	43%

**Item 5. Foster care re-entries**

Reviewers rated this assessment Strength if during the period under review a child did not have an entry into care within a 12-month period from being discharged from another entry into foster care. Reviewers also rated this item as a Strength if a re-entry was an isolated incident during which the agency did what was reasonable to manage the risk following reunification but the child re-entered care for another reason (for example, the death of a parent). Reviewers rated this item as an Area Needing Improvement if re-entries occurring within a 12-month period were due to the same general reasons or same perpetrators. Reviewers rated this item as Not Applicable if : (1) the child entered foster care before, and remained in foster care during, the period under review; or (2) the child entered foster care before, and exited foster care during, the period under review and there was not another entry into foster care during the period under review.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Two of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*2 (100%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\*12 cases were not applicable**

***In the two cases that were rated as strengths for this item in both cases foster care re-entry was due to the treatment level of care that the child(ren) needed to receive. There were no files that were found to have area needing improvement for this item.***

**Item 6. Stability of foster care placement**

In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether the child experienced multiple placement changes during the period under review, and if so, whether the changes in placement settings were necessary to achieve the child's permanency goal or meet the child's service needs.

***Review Findings:*** **\*Eight of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*5 (63%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*3 (38%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\*6 of the cases were not applicable**

***Strengths: In the five cases rated as strengths for this item it was noted that in one case the child(ren) stayed at the same relative placement up until reunification occurred. In another case the child went from the Youth Regional Treatment Center (YRTC) to home. There was a case that was an Interstate Compact case and in that one the child remained in the same home for the life of the case. Two cases reviewed had only one move for the life of the cases. This move was to a foster home and then back home to achieve reunification.***



*Area needing improvement: In three cases this item was found to be needing improvement. In one case the youth was on the run for the majority of the period under review, therefore disrupting the placement. In another case there were 3 placements during the period under review. In the third case reviewed as needing improvement for this item there were 2 placements during the period under review due to the child's behaviors/needs.*

#### **Item 7. Permanency goal for child**

In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal for the child in a timely manner, including filing for termination of parental rights when relevant. Reviewers examined the appropriateness of a goal that ultimately rules out adoption, guardianship, or return to family. Reviewers assessed whether the child's best interests were thoroughly considered by DHHS in setting a goal of other planned living arrangement, and that such a decision is /was continually reviewed for ongoing appropriateness. Cases were assigned a rating of Strength for this item when reviewers determined that DHHS had established an appropriate permanency goal in a timely manner. Cases were assigned a rating of Area Needing Improvement when goals of reunification were not changed in a timely manner when it was apparent that reunification was unlikely to happen, termination of parental rights was not filed when the child had been foster care for 15 of the past 22 months and no compelling reasons were noted in the file, or the goal established for the child was not appropriate. Cases were identified as Not Applicable if the child was not in foster care.

#### ***Review Findings:***

- \*Eight of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*3 (38%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*5 (63%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \*6 were not applicable**

***Strengths: In the three cases reviewed that were rated as strengths for this item the permanency goals were established and achieved in a timely manner.***

***Area needing improvement: In the five cases reviewed that were rated as areas needing improvement for this item reasons varied. In one case it was noted that the permanency goal was not updated to reflect a placement change had occurred. In another case it was noted that the permanency goal was not established in 60 days and there was no documentation found in the case file to indicate as to why this did not occur. In two cases it was noted that it was difficult to tell when the permanency goal was established according to the case file. Two cases also lacked a current case plan/court report.***

#### **Item 8. Reunification, Guardianship or Permanent Placement with Relatives**

In assessing these cases reviewers determined whether DHHS had achieved children's goals of reunification, guardianship or placement with relatives in a timely manner. If the goals had not been achieved in a timely manner reviewers determined whether DHHS had made diligent efforts to achieve the goals.

#### ***Review Findings:***

- \*Four of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*4 (100%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \*10 as not applicable**

*Strengths: In the four cases that were found to have strengths on this item it was noted that in one case the family followed the case plan and reunification occurred within 9 months. In the other three cases reviewed that were rated as strengths for this item reunification did occur timely and after the child(rens) treatment needs/services were met. There were no cases reviewed that were found out to be needing improvement for this item.*

**Item 9. Adoption**

In assessing this item, reviewers were to determine whether appropriate and timely efforts (within 24 months of the most recent entry into foster care) had been or were being made to achieve finalized adoption.

*Review Findings:*

- \*One of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item
- \*1 (100%) case was rated as a strength
- \*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement
- \*13 were not applicable

*Strengths: In the one case that was rated as a strength for this item it was noted that the child had significant mental health needs and adoption had not occurred at the time this case was reviewed. The file did contain a lot of documentation to show that active efforts were being made by the DHHS worker to achieve adoption. These efforts included documentation to reflect that the DHHS worker was searching for possible adoptive homes in the area that would be willing/able to adopt a child with significant mental health issues. There were no cases reviewed to be needing improvement in this item.*

**Item 10. Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement**

Reviewers determined whether the agency had made or was making diligent efforts to assist children in attaining their goals related to other planned permanent living arrangements (Independent Living, Self-Sufficiency or Family Preservation).

*Review Findings:*

- \*Two of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item
- \*2 (100%) cases were rated as strengths
- \*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement
- \*12 were not applicable

*Strengths: In the two cases rated as strengths for this item it was noted that there was evidence documented in the case file that showed the youth was working on building skills towards Independent Living. These skills were reflected in the therapy notes and in notes regarding how the youth was doing in their job. In the other case there was a detailed Independent Living Plan found in the case file. There were no cases reviewed needing improvement for this item.*

*P1. Outcome Reviewer Comments: Reviewers comments on the cases found to be substantially achieved were that permanency goals were established within the set time frames and services helped to support and maintain the stability of the placements in these cases. On the cases rated as partially achieved reviewers commented some lack documentation regarding the*

*timeliness of when the permanency goal was actually established. There was also mention of one case not having a permanency goal established until 4 months after the case was opened. Reviewers commented that in couple of the cases permanency goals needed to be updated but were not.*

### **Status of Permanency Outcome P2**

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Total Percentage</b>
Substantially Achieved:	4	50%
Partially Achieved:	4	50%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	6	43%

### **Item 11. Proximity of foster care placement**

Reviewers were to determine whether the child's foster care setting was in close proximity to the child's parents or close relatives. Cases determined to be not applicable were those in which termination of parental rights had been completed prior to the period under review, or in which contact with parents was not considered to be in the child's best interest.

#### ***Review Findings:***

- \*Six of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*6 (100%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*0 cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \*8 were not applicable**

*Strengths: In the six cases reviewed rated as strengths for this item the following reasons were given: In three cases a treatment level of care was needed to meet the youth's behavioral/mental health issues. In two of the cases the child(ren) were placed within one hour of the parents, putting them in close proximity. In the other case it was noted that the child(ren) were placed 0-20 miles from the parent(s) and were residing with a relative. There were no cases rated as needing improvement on this item.*

### **Item 12. Placement with siblings**

Reviewers were to determine whether siblings were or had been placed together and if not, was separation necessary to meet the needs (service or safety needs) of one or more of the children.

#### ***Review Findings:***

- \*Two of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*2 (100%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*0 as area needing improvement**
- \*12 were not applicable**

*Strengths: In the two cases rated as strengths in this item the following reasons were given: In one case the oldest sibling had behaviors that required separation from the other two siblings. In the other case the child was initially placed with their half siblings but then was reunified with his/her biological father. There were no cases rated as needing improvement on this item.*

**Item 13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care**

In assessing this item reviewers determined whether DHHS had or was making diligent efforts to facilitate visitations between children in foster care and their parents and siblings. Reviewers also determined whether these visits typically occurred with sufficient frequency to meet the needs of the children and families. Non applicable cases were those where the child had no siblings in foster care, if the parents could not be located, and/or if visitation with the parents was considered not in the best interests of the child. Reviewers rated this item for the period under review based on the individual needs of the child and family, rather than on the DHHS policy regarding visitation. The DHHS visitation guidebook recommends a minimum of one visit every two weeks between child and parent unless it would not be in the child's best interest because the parent is the perpetrator of severe physical abuse or sexual abuse. DHHS Policy requires that siblings placed separately must have a minimum of one visit per month. Other forms of communication including phone calls and letters are strongly encouraged.

***Review Findings:***

- \*Seven of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*2 (29%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*5 (71%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \*7 were not applicable**

*Strengths: In the two cases that were rated strengths on this item it was noted that visitation was occurring weekly with the parents/siblings and the visitation plan was found in the case file.*

*Area needing improvement: In the five cases rated as area needing improvement the following reasons were noted: In three of the cases there were no efforts found in the case file to reflect that active efforts by the DHHS were made to locate the fathers in those cases. In one case it was noted that despite DHHS efforts to support visitation through providing transportation, gas vouchers and location compatibility the parents in the case chose not to see the child(ren) as often as they could have. In one case the father of the child(ren) chose not to participate in visits, despite DHHS efforts to include him.*

**Item 14. Preserving connections**

Reviewers determined whether DHHS had or was making diligent efforts to preserve the child's primary connection and characteristics while in foster care. Reviewers had to make a professional judgment about the child's primary connections and then explore whether those connections have been preserved through case planning and service delivery.

***Review Findings:***

- \*Eight of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*7 (88%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*1 (13%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \* 6 were not applicable**

*Strengths: In the seven cases that were rated as strengths on this item the following reasons were noted: In four cases connections were maintained through extended family visits and holiday celebrations. ICWA was addressed in all of the cases. In two cases community connections were maintained through relative placements and child(ren) remaining in the same daycare. In one case it was noted that due to the parents frequent moving from home to home there was little to no community connections to maintain for the child(ren).*

*Area needing improvement: In the one case that was rated as needing improvement ICWA was not established on the fathers side and there were no efforts found in the case file to locate the father in this case.*

#### **Item 15. Relative placement**

Reviewers had to focus on the title IV-E provision that requires States to consider giving preference to placing the child with relatives, and determine whether the State considered such a placement and how (for example, seeking out and evaluating the child's relatives). Relatives include non-custodial parents, such as fathers not in the home, if applicable to the case. Reviewers had to determine the extent to which the agency identified relatives who had some reasonable degree of relationship with the child and with whom the child might reside. There did not need to be in the case record a formal evaluation of relatives with whom the child might reside, but for reviewers to have answered "yes" evidence must exist, through either the case documentation or the case interviews, that relatives were evaluated and considered. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if (1) the agency assessed the child's needs and determined that he/she required special services *and* (2) the agency assessed potential relative placements and determined that the relative placements did not have the capacity to meet the child's needs. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength unless no efforts were made to locate or identify relatives for placement, or placement with a family known to the child. Reviewers rated this item as not applicable if (1) the agency determined upon the child's initial entry into care that his/her needs required residential treatment services and a relative placement would be inappropriate, or (2) if relatives were unable to be identified despite the agency's diligent efforts to do so, or in situations such as abandonment in which the identity of the parents and relatives remains unknown despite efforts to identify them. Reviewers were to check not applicable if the child was placed with relatives.

#### ***Review Findings:***

- \*Five of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**
- \*4 (80%) cases were rated as strengths**
- \*1 (20%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**
- \* 9 were not applicable**

*Strengths: In the four cases rated as strengths for this item the following reasons were noted: In three cases the child(ren) were placed with relatives. In the other case efforts were made to place with relatives but did not occur due to the relatives not being suitable for placement.*

*Area needing improvement: In the one case rated as needing improvement on this item it was noted that the file lacked documentation as to why the relatives were ruled out for placement.*

#### **Item 16. Relationship of child in care with parents**

In assessing this item, reviewers determined if there was evidence of a strong, emotionally supportive relationship between the child in foster care and the child's parents during the period under review. Reviewers assigned a rating of Strength for this item when there was evidence of regular visitation between parent and child. Reviewers assigned a rating of Area Needing Improvement when they determined the agency had not made diligent

efforts to support the child's relationship with the father or mother. A case was considered not applicable if a relationship with the child's parents was contrary to the child's safety or best interest during the period under review.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Seven of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*3 (43%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*4 (57%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\*7 were not applicable**

***Strengths: Three cases were rated as strengths for this item because in one case transportation services were provided to bring the youth home for visits. In the other two cases transportation services were set up for the parents to get to and from visits with the children.***

***Area needing improvement: In the four cases rated as needing improvement for this item the father was not involved in the case and there was no documentation found in the case file that reflected active efforts were made by DHHS to locate the fathers.***

***P2. Outcome Reviewer Comments: On the cases where this outcome was determined to be substantially achieved reviewers commented that visitation was occurring on a regular basis (at least monthly) and supported by provided transportation when needed. It was also noted that ICWA was addressed in most of these cases. In the cases where this outcome was only partially achieved the reviewers commented that on two of the cases there were no documented efforts found to show that the DHHS worker made concerted efforts to locate the fathers in those cases. In one case comments made were that visits didn't occur on a monthly basis between the Mother and child. There was evidence found to support that the DHHS worker did make concerted efforts to support this occurring through numerous financial offers via gas vouchers or paid transportation that could have been utilized by the Mother to go and see the child(ren).***

### **III. WELL-BEING**

***Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.***

**Status of Well-Being Outcome WB1**

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Total Percentage</b>
Substantially Achieved:	6	43%
Partially Achieved:	6	43%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	2	14%
Not Applicable:	0	0%



**Item 17. Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents**

In assessing item 17, reviewers were to determine whether DHHS adequately assessed the needs of children, parents and foster parents AND provided the services to meet those needs. Reviewers rated item 17 as a strength if (1) a needs assessment was conducted for the child(ren), parents, and foster parents, and (2) appropriate services were provided in relation to the identified needs of the target child in foster care cases, or for all children in in-home cases. Education and physical or mental health services to the target child were not rated for this item (these are rated in items 21, 22, and 23). Reviewers had to document whether these services were provided to parents.

***Review Findings:***

**\*All of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*8 (57%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*6 (43%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 0 were not applicable**

**\*Four of the cases rated as strengths were in home cases and four were out of home cases. Two of the cases rated as area needing improvement were in home cases and four were out of home cases.**

***Strengths: Because 17 is broke down in to parts A, B, and C. This item will be broken out in to three pieces.***

***17a. Strengths: The child's needs and services were both informally and formally assessed and addressed through initial assessments, case management and family team meetings. Some of the services provided to address the identified needs were, behavioral assessments, Developmental Disabilities assessments, Electronic Monitoring, Family Support, and tracker services.***

***17a. Area needing improvement: In one case it was noted that services were not put in place to address the identified need that the child had to acquire social skills. Services recommended to address this need were for the youth to get involved with a church group or a club like Boy Scouts.***

***17b. Strengths: In several of the cases rated as strengths it was noted that the worker did a good job assessing both parents' needs by conducting informal/formal assessments. Informal assessments were completed through face to face contact and family team meetings. Comprehensive Family Assessment was also completed. Some of the services offered to address the identified needs were transportation assistance, housing assistance and therapy.***

***17b. Area needing improvement: In one case it was noted that the Mother expressed during the interview that she did not feel her input was valued by the DHHS worker nor did she feel as though she was informed of the family team meetings in a timely manner. There were cases that the father was not involved or assessed and no documentation was found in the file that concerted efforts were made to locate and/or include the father. In another case the father was in prison and not assessed. There was no documentation found in the file to indicate why the father in this case could not have been assessed.***

***17c. Strengths: In the cases reviewed rated as strengths it was noted that the foster parent's needs were assessed by the worker discussing the foster parent's concerns/needs and providing***

*the needed service, such as foster care payments, respite care and parenting assistance in dealing with children that have behavioral issues.*

*17c. Area needing improvement: There were no cases that were rated as needing improvement on this item.*

**Item 18. Child and family involvement in case planning**

**In assessing this item reviewers were to determine whether the agency actively involved the parent(s), guardian, child(ren) and other people identified by the family in the case planning activities relevant to the current case plan. A determination of involvement in case planning required that a parent (guardian) and the child (older than 8 and not incapacitated) had actively participated in identifying the services and goals for the case plan.**

***Review Findings:***

**\*All of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*6 (43%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*8 (57%) of the cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 0 were not applicable**

**\*In the six cases rated as strengths three were in home cases and 3 were out of home cases. In the eight cases that were rated as area needing improvement three were in home cases and five were out of home cases.**

***Strengths: In five of the cases it was noted that both parents and the child was involved in the case planning as evidenced by involvement in the team meetings and worker visits with the youth. In one case it was noted that both the child and the mother were involved in the case planning through interactions in family team meetings and worker visits with the parents, however the father refused to participate despite DHHS worker efforts to include him.***

***Area needing improvement: In five cases the father was not involved because no efforts were made to locate them. In two cases the parents and child were not involved in the case planning process and there was no information found in the case file or through interviews to indicate why this was. In another case the child did not appear to be involved in the case planning process and the reason as to why was not documented in the case file.***

**Item 19. Worker visits with child**

**Reviewers were to determine the typical pattern of visits between the worker and child and if these visits were sufficient to ensure adequate monitoring of the child's safety and well being. Reviewers were also to determine whether visits focused on issues pertinent to case planning, service delivery, and achievement of the goals.**

***Review Findings:***

**\*All of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*12 (86%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*2 (14%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 0 were not applicable**

**Five of the cases rated as a strength for this item were in home cases and seven were out of home. One of the cases rated as area needing improvement was an in home case and the other was an out of home case.**



*Strengths: In the 12 cases reviewed found to be strengths in this item there was found to be at least monthly contacts between the worker and the child occurring. The quality of those narratives addressed permanency, safety and well being issues.*

*Area needing improvement: In the two cases rated as needing improvement it was noted in one case that the file lacked contact documentation and the child was not seen monthly. In the other case the quality of the narratives did not address permanency, safety or well being issues.*

#### **Item 20. Worker visits with parents**

Reviewers were to assess whether the caseworker had sufficient face to face contact with parents to encourage attainment of their children's permanency goal while ensuring safety and well being. Cases that were considered not applicable if there is no plan for further involvement between the parents and the agency or the parents and the child, and the child is not in a permanent home.

#### ***Review Findings:***

**\*13 of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*4 (31%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*9 (69%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 1 was not applicable**

**\*Two of the cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases and the other two were out of home cases. Four of the cases rated as area needing improvement for this item were in home cases and five were out of home cases.**

*Strengths: In the four cases visits between worker and parents (mother and father) were occurring at least monthly. The quality of the contact narratives was noted to be very good and addressed the permanency, safety, and well being of the child.*

*Area needing improvement: Visits with the Mother in the majority of the cases were occurring. In six cases there were no contacts with the father. Efforts to locate the father were not documented. In two cases monthly contact with both parents did not occur. In the other case while the agency did make concerted efforts to have visits with the father on a monthly basis the father did not cooperate.*

**WB1. Outcome Reviewer Comments:** Reviewers commented on the cases that were rated as being substantially achieved that extensive efforts were made by the Department to ensure the families had the capacity to provide for their children's needs and were assessed formally and informally through ongoing assessments and mental health assessments. Families participated in therapy, family support, utilization of respite care when needed, communication during visits with caseworkers, and involvement in the case planning process. Families got involved in the case planning process through monthly contacts with the DHHS worker and through family team meetings. In the cases where this outcome was found to be partially achieved reviewers commented that in several cases the father was never located by DHHS, and the child was not included in the case planning process. In the two cases that were rated as not achieved reviewer comments were: Father not involved in the case planning process, no visits occurring with the father and there was a lack of quality documentation in the contact narratives.

## **Status of Well-Being Outcome WB2**

	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Total Percentage</b>
Substantially Achieved:	11	92%
Partially Achieved:	0	0%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	1	8%
Not Applicable:	2	14%

### **Item 21. Educational needs of the child**

When addressing educational issues for families receiving in-home services, reviewers considered whether the educational needs are/were relevant to the reason why the agency is/was involved with the family, and whether the need to address educational issues is/was a reasonable expectation given the circumstances of the agency's involvement with the family. (If not, reviewers rated item 21 as not applicable.) Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if (1) the agency made extensive efforts to address the child's educational needs and the school system was unresponsive, especially if the problems are with a local school or jurisdiction; (2) if the child(ren)'s educational needs were assessed and addressed, including cases where the educational records were missing and the reasons why; or (3) if the agency conducted an assessment of educational issues and determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for educational services.

#### ***Review Findings:***

**\*Twelve of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*11 (92%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*1 (8%) case was rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 2 were not applicable**

**\*Six of the cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases and five were out of home cases. One case rated as area needing improvement was an out of home case.**

***Strengths: In the eleven cases rated as strengths for this item it was noted that educational needs of the child were assessed and addressed by the case worker by providing educational testing and monitoring at the schools they attended. Services provided to address the needs found ranged from IEP's and an ESU referral to assisting with a GED. Grade/report cards were found in the case file.***

***Area needing improvement: In the one case rated as needing improvement it was found that there was no educational documents found in the case file and there was no information regarding any assessments of needs being completed.***

***WB2. Outcome Reviewer Comments: Reviewers commented on those outcomes found to be substantially achieved that the children received appropriate services to meet their educational needs when needs were identified and IEP/GED material was found in the case file. In the case that this outcome was found to be not achieved the reviewers commented that there was no documentation found in the case file regarding grade reports of any kind.***

***Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.***

**Status of Well-Being Outcome WB3:**

	Total Number	Total Percentage
Substantially Achieved:	7	58%
Partially Achieved:	5	42%
Not Achieved or Addressed:	0	0%
Not Applicable:	2	14%

**Item 22. Physical health of the child**

When addressing health issues for families receiving in-home services, reviewers considered whether the physical health needs are/were relevant to the reason why the agency is/was involved with the family and whether the need to address physical health issues is/was a reasonable expectation given the circumstances of the agency's involvement with the family. (If not, reviewers rated this item as not applicable.) For example, if a child became known to the agency and was determined to be in need of in-home services at least partly as a result of physical abuse or sexual abuse, then it is reasonable to expect the agency to provide services to ensure that the child receives the appropriate physical health services. Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency conducted an assessment of physical health and determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for physical health services.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Eleven of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*8 (73%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*3 (27%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 3 were not applicable**

**\*Two of the cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases and six were out of home cases. One case rated as area needing improvement for this item was an in home case and the other two were out of home cases.**

***Strengths: In the eight cases rated as strengths for this item it was found that medical/dental needs were assessed, services were provided when needed and it was documented in the case file.***

***Area needing improvement: In the three cases rated as area needing improvement for this item there was no updated medical/dental exam dates documented in the case file for two of the cases and no updated dental exam dates in the other case.***

**Item 23. Mental health of the child**

Reviewers were to determine whether during the period under review, the agency addressed the mental/behavioral health needs of the child(ren). Reviewers rated this item as a Strength if the agency conducted an assessment of the child's mental health and

determined that there were no problems in that area, nor any need for mental health services. If there was a need for services then they were offered.

***Review Findings:***

**\*Eleven of the 14 cases reviewed were applicable to this item**

**\*9 (82%) cases were rated as strengths**

**\*2 (18%) cases were rated as area needing improvement**

**\* 3 were not applicable**

**\*Three cases rated as strengths for this item were in home cases and six were out of home cases. One case rated as area needing improvement for this item was an in home case and the other was an out of home case.**

***Strengths: In the nine cases rated as strengths for this item there was found to be initial and ongoing formal/informal assessments being conducted on the child ranging from the Youth Level of Service evaluation to the Comprehensive Family Assessment. Informal assessments were completed by the DHHS worker through monthly team meetings and face to face contacts with the youth.***

***Area Needing Improvement: In the one case that was rated as area needing improvement for this item there was no documentation found in the case file in regards to mental/behavioral assessments completed despite the fact that the youth was in mental health counseling. In the other case the file lacked documentation as to why youth was in therapy.***

***WB3. Outcome Reviewer Comments: Reviewers commented on the outcomes found to be substantially achieved that mental health needs were assessed and if there were needs identified that they were also addressed. There was also medical/dental/mental health documentation found in the case file. On the cases found to be partially achieved reviewers commented that there was no updates in the case file in regards to how mental health therapy was going and there was no updated medical information found. In one case there was no documentation found in the case file in regards to dental exams/updates.***

## NSA Results

**Case Sample:** *Mini CFSR Review – April 2010*

**Type of Review:** *2nd Mini CFSR*

**Report Type:** *Northern Service Area*

**Number of Reviews:** *14*

**Review Period:** *April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 – April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010*

### **Performance Item Results**

S = Strength

ANI = Area Needing Improvement

N/A = Not Applicable

Performance Item	S	ANI	N/A	S (%)	ANI (%)	N/A (%)	Total
Number of Submitted Review:							14
Item 1: Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment	2	0	12	100	0	86	14
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment	0	0	14	0	0	100	14
Item 3: Services to family to protect child(ren) in the home and prevent removal or re-entry into foster care	8	0	6	100	0	43	14
Item 4: Risk assessment and safety management	11	3		79	21		14
Item 5: Foster care re-entries	2	0	12	100	0	86	14
Item 6: Stability of foster care placement	5	3	6	63	38	43	14
Item 7: Permanency goal for child	3	5	6	38	63	43	14
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives	4	0	10	100	0	71	14
Item 9: Adoption	1	0	13	100	0	93	14
Item 10: Other planned permanent living arrangement	2	0	12	100	0	86	14
Item 11: Proximity of foster care placement	6	0	8	100	0	57	14
Item 12: Placement with siblings	2	0	12	100	0	86	14
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care	2	5	7	29	71	50	14
Item 14: Preserving connections	7	1	6	88	13	43	14
Item 15: Relative placement	4	1	9	80	20	64	14
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents	3	4	7	43	57	50	14
Item 17: Needs and services of child, parents, and foster parents	8	6		57	43		14
Item 18: Child and family involvement in case planning	6	8	0	43	57	0	14
Item 19: Caseworker visits with child	12	2		86	14		14
Item 20: Caseworker visits with parent(s)	4	9	1	31	69	7	14

Item 21: Educational needs of the child	11	1	2	92	8	14	14
Item 22: Physical health of child	8	3	3	73	27	21	14
Item 23: Mental/behavioral health of the child	9	2	3	82	18	21	14

SA = Substantially  
Achieved (%)

PA = Partially  
Achieved (%)

NACH = Not  
Achieved (%)

N/A = Not  
Applicable

Performance Outcome	SA	PA	NACH	N/A	SA (%)	PA (%)	NACH (%)	N/A (%)	Total
Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.	2	0	0	12	100	0	0	86	14
Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	11	2	1	0	79	14	7	0	14
Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.	3	5	0	6	38	63	0	43	14
Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.	4	4	0	6	50	50	0	43	14
Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	6	6	2	0	43	43	14	0	14
Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	11	0	1	2	92	0	8	14	14
Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	7	5	0	2	58	42	0	14	14